WHO IS A JEW?

A Biblical Examination of Israel, Covenant, and the True People of God

A Study recommended By

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In our day, much confusion surrounds the subject of Israel. Political events, popular preaching, and widely held assumptions have combined to obscure what the Scriptures plainly teach. It is therefore necessary to return to the Word of God and ask a simple but vital question: Who is a Jew, according to the Bible?

Two Israels in Scripture

The Scriptures present a distinction that must not be overlooked. There is an Israel after the flesh, and there is an Israel according to promise.

"For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel." (Romans 9:6, KJV)

Here we are taught that outward membership in the nation does not equate to true standing before God. The physical nation served its purpose in redemptive history, yet it pointed beyond itself to a greater reality—namely, a spiritual people united to Christ.

The Modern Misunderstanding

Many today equate the modern state of Israel with the Israel of Scripture. From this assumption arises what is often termed Christian Zionism, where present events are treated as the fulfilment of prophecy.

"I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee." (Genesis 12:3, KJV)

This promise, however, was spoken to Abraham, not to a modern political nation. The New Testament directs us to Christ as the fulfilment of all promise.

"If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed." (Galatians 3:29, KJV)

The Biblical Definition of a Jew

"He is not a Jew, which is one outwardly… But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart." (Romans 2:28–29, KJV)

This definition overturns all merely external claims. Lineage, ritual, and

outward distinction cannot secure favour with God. The true mark of His people is an inward work wrought by the Spirit.

Circumcision: Sign and Substance

Circumcision was given to Abraham as a sign of the covenant (Genesis 17). Yet it pointed to a deeper reality—the cleansing of the heart.

"Circumcise yourselves to the LORD, and take away the foreskins of your heart." (Jeremiah 4:4, KJV)

Israel often rested in the outward sign while neglecting the inward grace. What was meant to signify spiritual renewal became, in many cases, a false ground of confidence.

The True Circumcision

"For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." (Philippians 3:3, KJV)

The Church—composed of all who believe—is here described as the true circumcision. The defining mark is no longer outward, but inward.

No Salvation Apart from Christ

"Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father." (1 John 2:23, KJV)

This applies universally. No man stands in covenant favour with God apart from Christ.

A Needed Caution

"I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart." (Romans 9:2, KJV)

Truth must be spoken clearly, yet with sobriety. The Apostle himself combined doctrinal clarity with deep compassion.

Conclusion

A Jew is not defined by outward descent. Circumcision is not merely of

the flesh. The true people of God are those who are in Christ.

"For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen."
(2 Corinthians 1:20, KJV)